

Quitting Smoking

Smoking is one of the most dangerous habits for your health and the single leading preventable cause of disease and death in the United States. In fact, smoking is responsible for nearly one of every five deaths each year. The good news is that by quitting smoking you can drastically decrease your risk of disease and improve your quality of life within the first year alone.

Why should you quit smoking?

When you quit smoking, you will have:

- Lowered risk for lung cancer and many other types of cancer
- Reduced risk for heart disease, stroke and peripheral vascular disease
- Reduced heart disease risk within the first two years of quitting
- Reduced respiratory symptoms, such as coughing, wheezing and shortness of breath.
 - While these symptoms may not disappear, they do not continue to progress at the same rate among people who quit compared with those who continue to smoke
- Reduced risk of developing some lung diseases, such as chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD)
- Reduced risk for infertility in women of childbearing age

How do I quit?

Quitting isn't always easy and may take multiple attempts. These tips may help:

- Enlist the support of friends and family
- Try a gradual approach if you're not comfortable quitting at once
- Get rid of lighters and ash trays
- Lower stress by exercising
- Try chewing sugarless gum or another healthy substitute to curb cravings when you feel like smoking

How can my health coverage help?

Because cigarettes are highly addictive, you may want help quitting. All Marketplace plans cover an array of essential health benefits, which include preventive services, like tobacco-use screenings. You may also be able to get counseling and prescription nicotine replacement products or medications. Be sure to discuss your options with your doctor or health care provider to find the right strategy for you.